

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 AID-05 MCT-01 /062 W
-----011414Z 104135 /45

R 311736Z MAR 77
FM AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 156
INFO AMEMBASSY PANAMA
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTO DOMINGO 1523

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, DR
SUBJ: WESSIN Y WESSIN GENERATES POLITICAL ACTIVITY FROM PUERTO
RICO

1. RETIRED GENERAL ELIAS WESSIN Y WESSIN, FORBIDDEN TO ENTER THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC SINCE HIS DEPORTATION IN 1971 FOR PLOTTING TO OVERTHROW THE GOVERNMENT, AND NOW APPARENTLY ESTABLISHING HIMSELF IN SANTURCE, PUERTO RICO, HAS BEGUN TO RENEW HIS POLITICAL ACTIVITIES. IN STATEMENTS TO THE PRESS, A WESSIN SPOKESMAN SAID THAT THE FORMER GENERAL WOULD STAY IN PUERTO RICO "ON A PERMANENT BASIS, A FEW MINUTES FLIGHT FROM SANTO DOMINGO".

2. WESSIN MOVED THIS WEEK TO STRENGTHEN HIS POLITICAL PARTY, THE PARTIDO QUISQUEYANA DOMINICANA (PQD), BY NAMING MANUEL ANTONIO ("MANOLIN") JIMENEZ RODRIQUEZ, FORMERLY AMBASSADOR TO PANAMA AND MAYOR OF SANTO DOMINGO, AS PQD SECRETARY GENERAL. HE ALSO NAMED SEVERAL OTHER OFFICERS IN THE PARTY AND CALLED FOR A MEETING OF THE PQD CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE IN SANTURCE FOR APRIL 3.

3. IN HIS FIRST STATEMENTS AFTER BECOMING SECRETARY GENERAL,
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JIMENEZ, APPARENTLY PLAYING ON PRESIDENT BALAGUER'S WIDELY RUMORED HEALTH PROBLEMS, CALLED FOR THE PRESIDENT TO "MAKE WAY FOR ANOTHER FIGURE", AND TO REALIZE THAT "THE BEST THING WOULD BE HIS RETIREMENT FROM PUBLIC LIFE". HE FURTHER CALLED WESSIN "A GUARANTEE FOR THE PEACE OF THE COUNTRY". HE SPOKE OUT AGAINST WESSIN'S CONTINUED EXILE AND SAID THE NEW PARTY LEADERSHIP WOULD PRESS FOR THE RETURN OF THE FORMER GENERAL

TO THE COUNTRY.

4. WESSIN BYPASSED THE PQD EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE TO NAME JIMENEZ, A PARTY OUTSIDER, AS SECRETARY GENERAL, CAUSING A CRISIS WITHIN THE PQD. SEVERAL LONG-STANDING OFFICERS IN THE PARTY, INCLUDING PARTY VICE PRESIDENT LEONTE BERNARD VAZQUEZ, CONSIDERING THE ACTION HIGHHANDED, HAVE RESIGNED. OTHERS ARE THREATENING TO LEAVE THE PARTY.

5. COMMENT: WESSIN'S POLITICAL STAR HAS FALLEN GREATLY IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC THROUGH HIS YEARS OF EXILE, AND HIS PARTY IS ONLY ONE OF A CLUSTER OF SMALL OPPOSITION GROUPS IN THE COUNTRY. HIS RECENT ACTIONS BEAR WATCHING, HOWEVER, SINCE WESSIN MAY STILL ENJOY SOME SUPPORT FROM LOWER MILITARY RANKS. HE IS CONSIDERED ONE OF THE PRETENDERS TO LEADERSHIP OF ANY NEW OPPOSITION BLOC WHICH MAY BE FORMED FOR THE MAY 1978 NATIONAL ELECTIONS. HIS SELECTION OF MANOLIN JIMENEZ, WHO WAS ALSO EXILED FOR CONSPIRATORIAL PLOTTING, CONFIRMS THE HARD-LINE RIGHTIST ORIENTATION OF THE PQD, AND BRINGS TOGETHER TWO FIGURES NOT KNOWN FOR THEIR COMMITMENT TO DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES. PRESIDENT BALAGUER AND HIS SUPPORTERS, NEVER UNDERESTIMATING WESSIN'S TALENTS AT PLOTTING AND POLITICAL TROUBLE-MAKING, TAKE HIM SERIOUSLY, AND VIEW HIS PRESENCE IN PUERTO RICO UNEASILY.
HURWITCH

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
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